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ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT WASHINGTON HALL,

IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,

ON THE 30th MAY, 1826,

AS INTRODUCTORY TO THE EXERCISES OF THE PUPILS OF THE

New-York Institution

FOR THE

INSTRUCTION

OF THE

DEAF AND DUMB,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE

Exercises, and Notes and Documents,

IN RELATION TO THE SUBJECT.

—●—
BY SAMUEL AKERLY, M. D.

...
PHYSICIAN AND SECRETARY TO THE INSTITUTION.
—●—

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS,

For the Benefit of the Institution.

—●—
NEW-YORK:

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1826.



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JOHN H. GAZLAY,

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} DEAF AND DUMB ASSISTANTS.

ADDRESS, &c.



THE Directors of the New-York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, in presenting their pupils before the public, beg leave to introduce the exercises of the evening, by some general observations on the subject.

The school of the Institution was opened as a Charity, in May, 1818, and has consequently been eight years in operation. During this time, the Directors have contended with difficulties which have been gradually surmounted, and they now have the pleasure to state, that the Institution is in a flourishing condition. The teachers are well qualified to instruct the Deaf and Dumb, the pupils are more numerous than they have been, and the funds of the Society are in a progressive state of improvement. This has authorized an increase of the pupils, which now amount to sixty-two. Here then is an unusual spectacle presented to this assembly, of more than sixty human beings, deprived of their hearing, and thereby rendered incapable of producing harmonious sounds or articulation.

In ordinary language, these persons are denominated Deaf and Dumb, and the common acceptance of the meaning of Dumbness, is, that a person so afflicted is *Dumb*, like the beasts of the field. But the exercises of this evening, it is believed, will convince every beholder to the contrary. The French express their condition with more propriety, by calling them *Deaf Mutes*. They are *Mute* because they are *Deaf*.

The pupils of this Institution are classed as follows:

Charity Pupils provided for by the State of New-York,	32
Provided for by the New-York "Female Association,"	5
Private Pay Pupils, - - - - -	6
Part Pay Pupils, - - - - -	5
Entire Charity Pupils, - - - - -	12
Clothed, supported and instructed for their services,	2
<hr/>	
Total,	*62
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These sixty-two pupils have been collected from various places. Thirty-eight (38) belong to different and distant

* See list of pupils in Appendix, Note A.

parts of the State of New-York, 19 belong to this city, four to the State of New-Jersey, and one to Connecticut.

This Institution is essentially a charitable one. The State provides for 32 indigent pupils, but no more, although there are 645 Deaf Mutes* within the limits of the Commonwealth, as ascertained by the late census; and there are numerous applicants who cannot be received, without exceeding the means at the disposal of the Directors. There is no surplus from the State provision to enable them to extend the benefits of the Institution; and if it was not for other resources in this city, the pupils would be limited to about half the number actually under instruction. Next in number to the State pupils are the charity scholars of this city. Of the remainder, some pay in part, and a few, the whole amount of their board and tuition.

There are a number of Deaf Mutes in this city, of an age and capacity to be instructed, and who do not attend the school. Want of information or inability to pay, may prevent the parents from making application; the Directors therefore take this opportunity of stating, that all those living in the city, whether they can pay or not, will be received as day scholars.

To a person unacquainted with the art of instructing the Deaf and Dumb, it appears almost like magic that they can be instructed. This arises from the prevalent idea of dumbness, and the aptitude of most people to compare *Deaf Mutes* to *Dumb Beasts*. It is not wonderful, however, that such opinions should prevail, since they have their origin in remote antiquity. An expression of the same sentiment is given by the Roman poet Lucretius :

“ T’ instruct the Deaf no art could ever reach,
No care improve them, and no wisdom teach.”

But that they have capacity to be instructed is no longer doubted. The eight years experience of this Institution has amply demonstrated, that the minds of the Deaf and Dumb may be cultivated and improved, and that time and opportunity only are wanting, to instruct them in all the ordinary branches of a good education.

This Institution being provided with able instructors, the pupils have made creditable improvement, and the Directors are highly gratified with their acquirements; and considering the short time that has been allotted to their instruction,

* See Note B, containing the number of Deaf and Dumb in each County of the State.

they feel satisfied in expressing the opinion that some of these Deaf Mutes would do honour to any school.

The plan of instruction pursued by the teachers is derived from the works of the celebrated Abbe Sicard, of France, and is substantially the same as that pursued in other schools for the Deaf and Dumb in this country, of which there are now seven in active operation, and the establishment of others is contemplated. The want of qualified teachers retards the opening of schools in other States; and the Deaf and Dumb, which in the limits of the Union, probably amount to some thousands, must continue in their darkness and ignorance until other schools are opened, since those already established can only give instruction to a small portion of them.

Those who wish to embark in the arduous duties of instructing Deaf Mutes, must study the works of the Abbe Sicard, where the principles of the art are laid down, and from which, with practice, by beginning at the elements with a few pupils, a person of good sense and common industry, may make a teacher. There are obstructions and difficulties as in every new undertaking, but in this they are by no means insurmountable. Our teachers, by pursuing the natural methods pointed out by Sicard, have instructed themselves while they were teaching Deaf Mutes. They have never been out of this city to acquire information, and their first labours were bestowed upon their first pupils in the school of this Institution. So might others do, with patient and persevering industry, if while in daily intercourse with their pupils, they would study Sicard's "*Theory of Signs*," and his other work on "*The instruction of Deaf Mutes*."*

The Directors have recently received a communication through Mr. Clay, Secretary of State, from the Baron de Mareuil, Minister Plenipotentiary from France to the United States, in which he makes known that he is authorized to say, that the Royal Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in Paris, will receive foreign subjects to prepare them for the duties of instructors, and that it would even send qualified teachers of either sex to this country, if they should be desired. A similar communication has also been received from the French Consul in New-York, (Count D'Espainville) through his Honour the Mayor of this city, (Philip Hone). If this Institution was not already provided, it

* "*Instruction d'un Sourd-muet de naissance*," and "*Théorie des Signes, ou introduction a l'étude des langues*."

would be glad of the opportunity thus offered, and the Directors take this occasion to mention the proposition, that others of the United States about establishing schools, may profit by the information.

There are five distinct grades or series of signs employed to instruct Deaf Mutes in the school of this city.

1. The first series consists of the manual signs, or signs for letters, being the single-handed alphabet of De L'Epee and Sicard. Words are spelled by using these manual signs, either with the right or left hand.*

2. The second embraces the greatest number of signs, being those which represent words. Words either spoken or written are employed by us to express our ideas, hence the speaker or writer must first be supplied with a stock of words for that purpose: so with the Deaf and Dumb. Their minds are stored with words, and a knowledge of their signification, by the representation of objects, and definitions by signs; and these signs are afterwards combined and used to express their ideas. Verbal signs, however, are sometimes arbitrary and indefinite, or contractions of sign-definition, and cannot alone be depended upon. If it should be attempted to teach Deaf Mutes by these alone, the attempt would fail, as did the predecessor of Sicard, the worthy Abbe de L'Epee. He however made very considerable progress in the art of instructing Mutes, and must be considered as the first inventor of the art. His principal error consisted in adopting arbitrary verbal signs, instead of defining words by pantomimic or gestural definition.†

3. There is a third series, which is denominated (a series of) comprehensive signs, or signs for ideas. These relate either to words or sentences. If the idea contained in a word is complex, or requires a long definition, the teacher gives that definition by signs, and if necessary, adds examples in illustration. When the definition is understood, or

* See Note C, or Deaf and Dumb Alphabet.

† Sicard, after giving examples of the errors of his predecessor, makes the following remarks in his *Theory of Signs*, (vol. I p. 37, Introduction.)

“ En général, les autres signes des mot exprimant les opération de l'intelligence n'étoient pas plus heureux; aussi l'inventeur, qui ne pouvoit se le dissimuler, les faisoit il toujours précéder de la lettre initiale du mot. C'est ainsi qu'il se flattoit de réparer, d'une manière mécanique, ce qu'avoit toujours de défectueux le signe qu'il donnoit à l'idée, lequel ne pouvoit jamais être un signe convenu.”

“ In general, the other signs for words expressing the operations of the mind were not more happy, as the inventor (De L'Epee, who does not dissemble,) always made them by the initial letter of the word preceding the sign. It was thus he flattered himself that he would repair in a mechanical manner, the defects of the sign which he had given to the idea, and which could never be a conventional one.”

the idea contained in the word is comprehended by the pupil, the teacher adopts a single definite sign for the word. If the word relates to a sensible object, that object is described by gestures, and then a part of the description or a single gesture is employed to denote the word.

The ideas contained in a sentence in like manner, must first be explained to Deaf Mutes by pantomime, before they can understand the arrangement of words, which with us is artificial, and not always in the order that the ideas arise in the mind.

4. The fourth series is employed for numbers. The Abbe Sicard used the manual signs, after the manner of the Roman letters for numerals. This method is defective and embarrassing in the expression of high numbers. A method has been adopted in this Institution, the invention of the first teacher* of the Deaf and Dumb in New-York, and is an improvement of the system of signs for numbers. It is simple and easily acquired by the pupils, and any amount can be expressed by it, from unit to hundreds of millions.†

5. The fifth series embraces the grammatical signs, including those used for the expression of the moods and tenses of verbs. The signs employed to express the different parts of speech, as explained in Sicard's Theory of Signs,‡ are used in this Institution. But the signs for the moods and tenses of verbs in English, must necessarily, in some degree, differ from those of the great master, (Sicard) on account of the difference between the construction of our language and that of the French.

These several varieties of signs will be best understood by examples which will be given by the teacher and pupils, in the exercises of the evening.

Until within a few years, the Deaf Mutes of this country have been outcasts in society, and with the best efforts of the friends of humanity, only a small number of them have as yet been raised from darkness, ignorance and barbarism. Schools, however, for these children of misfortune are increasing, and it is hoped that public bodies and the community at large, will encourage the efforts of all those who are engaged in their instruction. The extent of the United States, renders it necessary that many other schools should be established, as those already in operation, cannot instruct a fifth part of them.

* A. O. Stansbury. † See Note D. where it is explained.

‡ Vol. 2. p. 559—and in the grammatical process explained in his Course of Instruction for a Deaf Mute.

Objections have been raised as to the propriety of giving them instruction, but the objections are made in such vague and general terms, as to be applicable to other children as well as to Deaf Mutes. The argument therefore requires no answer, since no one in this country doubts the propriety of instructing the rising generation. The Deaf and Dumb are a part of the human family; they labour under deprivations brought upon them without their own agency, most generally in the period of childhood; and they are peculiarly entitled to the sympathy of the community. If the means to raise them to the state of human understanding have heretofore been concealed, the veil is now withdrawn, and through the goodness of the Supreme Being, methods have been pointed out to compensate them in a great measure, for the privations they have suffered in the loss of hearing. They require, however, aid and assistance from those to whom the Deity has been more kind, and who enjoy their senses in perfection.

It has been said that they can work and be made useful to themselves and to society, without instruction. This is true only in a very limited sense; and if it were unexceptionably true, they would be no better, or in no higher grade of condition, than brute animals. Many look upon them in this light; and it is a fact, that Deaf Mutes are generally considered as a heavy affliction to their parents, and a great burthen to themselves and to society. But to parents who have mute children the prospect now brightens, and the establishment of schools to give instruction, promises relief. Instead of finding them the depressed beings they have heretofore been, we shall see that instruction opens their eyes to a new world, expands their ideas, elicits intelligence before unknown, and makes them a useful part of the human race, without degradation.

Objections have been raised to the establishment of schools for the Deaf and Dumb, on the presumption that they were few in number, and that the expense incurred was out of proportion to the benefits received by them. It has been estimated that they exist in the ratio of one in every 2000 of the population, and consequently, as the United States contains over ten millions of inhabitants, there will be more than 5000 Deaf and Dumb in the country. A teacher cannot instruct so many as in schools where children hear, and there are difficulties and peculiarities not attendant upon ordinary instruction. The art is yet in its infancy, but when it has been known and practised for some centuries, perhaps there will be such improvements as may reduce it to the facility and cheapness of the Lancasterian schools.

Some have imagined that when the present race of Deaf Mutes has been instructed, there would no longer be a necessity for such schools, and therefore they require no more support and encouragement. This opinion has been given without information or consideration. There always have been Deaf Mutes, and they will ever be found in human society. Deafness, like some diseases, appears to be hereditary, and to run in certain families, and in these cases the children are born without hearing. There are instances among the children now present, belonging to families in which there are two, three, four, and even seven Deaf and Dumb persons.*

When deafness is connate, it is generally supposed to proceed from original defect, or mal-conformation of the ear. These cases are numerous and thought to be irremediable; but it is doubtful whether some of them do not happen from causes at or subsequent to birth, and before the infant acquires the use of its vocal organs. Admitting, however, that those who have never spoken are cases of original defect, yet we have reason to believe that deafness is not always connate.

The ear is the organ of hearing, and when its parts become deranged, injured or diseased, deafness ensues, and the person so affected becomes *mute*, or in common acceptance, *Dumb*. Under such circumstances, the unfortunate person loses that correspondence or sympathetic association which exists between the organs of hearing and speech, whereby the latter are rendered inactive and silent. The sound of the human voice, when perfect, consists of modulated tones, to produce which, the person speaking must hear, in order to vary the tones, and produce harmonious articulation. Hence we find that a Deaf person does not speak, because he cannot hear; and although it is very possible that he may be taught to speak by imitation, yet the

* A gentleman called at the school in October, 1821, and stated that in Lexington, Kentucky, there were five families, all related to each other, and eight Deaf and Dumb children among them, viz.

Martin Hoghland,	has 2	Deaf and Dumb sons.
William Reed,	- 2	do. daughters.
Moses Hoghland	- 2	do. children, one male, one female.
Mr. Pain,	- 1	do. son.
Johnson Hoghland,	himself Deaf and Dumb,	has one Deaf and Dumb daughter, and two children who can hear.

Dec. 10th, 1821. Sold one of the books of *Elementary Exercises for the Deaf and Dumb*, to Dr. Frost, for a family of ten Deaf and Dumb.

Widow M. H. Williamson visited the school, and asked leave to introduce her mother, who is Deaf and Dumb, and who has had 14 children, none of whom are so.

voice is monotonous or unharmonious, for want of the ear to regulate it. Thus it appears that hearing is absolutely necessary to smooth and harmonious articulation, but not to simple utterance or speech, since the practice of the schools in Great Britain has established the fact, that in most cases, the Deaf and Dumb may be taught to speak.* This is accomplished upon the same principles that impediments in speech are corrected, as explained in the work of Dr. Watson, on the "Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb."

The organ of hearing is so essential, and withal so delicate, that it is strongly protected in a hard and bony case; but notwithstanding it is well shielded from external injury, accidents will reach, and disease assail it. Hence in every society of human beings there will be Deaf Mutes, and they are more numerous than most people imagine. But if we consider the causes which operate in producing this unfortunate condition, the surprise excited by the fact will moderate by the inquiry.

The numerous ills which "flesh is heir to," and the various accidents of life, may fall upon the organ of hearing. Concussion of the brain, blows on the head, fractures of the bone, may produce deafness; and if these happen in early age, the child becomes *Dumb*, or is ever after a *Mute*. Even though it had begun to speak, it soon ceases to exercise the organs of speech, as all things around are wrapped in profound silence. Extraneous substances lodged in the passages of the ears, also occasion distress and deafness; and

* There are two methods or systems of instructing the Deaf and Dumb, the French and the English.

"The English system contemplates the teaching of pupils to speak, and is generally adopted in the different schools of Great Britain. The French system, by which this attempt is discarded, is almost universally approved of on the continent, and has received a preference in our own school.

"No doubt can be entertained, but that the Deaf and Dumb may be taught to speak, after about five year's instruction; but when this faculty is obtained, it is imperfect and difficult of exercise. The voice is disagreeable, harsh and monotonous, and the articulations painful to the hearer. It has been observed in the schools of Europe, that when pupils are left to converse among themselves, that they never resort to oral communication; and when they leave the seminaries of instruction, they soon cease to exercise the organs of speech, and sink into their former mute condition. A deprivation of the sense of hearing, and the difficulty of recollecting what muscles are brought into action, to effect the pronunciation of certain words, constrain them to a resort to their natural gestures, or to an expression of their ideas, by writing. It appears to the committee, that the time consumed in teaching them elocution, could be more usefully devoted, in giving them a correct knowledge of written language." (From Introduction to Elementary Exercises.)

In the first establishment of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in New-York, the English system was attempted, but soon abandoned for that of the French, which has been continued, and still is in use, and considered by all conversant in the subject, as far the most preferable.

the natural secretion within the ear when accumulated, often acts as an extraneous body. Insects may penetrate the ear and destroy the hearing.

The most fruitful source of deafness, however, arises from the various diseases to which the human frame is subject. Fevers and inflammations are the most common. Measles, scarlet fever, small-pox, inflammations in the throat, tonsils, nose, and the ears themselves, are often the operating causes.*

Thus we find that deafness is not confined to the families now afflicted, but may by sickness be brought upon children, and dumbness follows, notwithstanding they may have previously spoken. A boy of this city lost his hearing at five years old from fits, and became Mute. He has been instructed in this Institution, and is now an apprentice to a cabinet-maker.† Another one struck his head in falling, at ten years old, and the accident resulted in the loss of hearing. He has also been instructed in this Institution, and is an apprentice to a gold-smith. He has not entirely lost his voice, but it is low, unnatural, and difficult to be understood. He has a taste for poetry, and has written some tolerable verses.‡

It is a happy circumstance for the Deaf and Dumb, that the art of instructing them has been so far perfected, as to be rendered efficient and useful. The effect is very soon evident in the improvement of the expression of the countenance. They alter for the better in their morals, and in their external appearance and behaviour. A knowledge of the Deity, and a sense of dependence on the will of a Supreme Being, supply the place of the grossest darkness, and the way is prepared for religious reflection and instruction. In fine, they are transformed from a dull, monotonous

* Of the children received into the Institution, some of them have been rendered Deaf by the following diseases and accidents.

Dropsy in the Head.	Gatherings and running from the Ears.
Falls and Blows on the Head.	Scarlet Fever.
Spotted Fever.	Fever.
Fits.	Measles.
Syphilis.	Falling in the Water.
Scrophula.	St. Vitus' Dance.

In January, 1826, there had been 154 persons received in the Institution, from the opening of the school in 1818. As far as is known, the causes of deafness were as follows:

Deafness, caused by sickness and accidents,	-	-	-	-	-	61
Born Deaf,	-	-	-	-	-	46
Not ascertained,	-	-	-	-	-	44
Idiots,	-	-	-	-	-	3

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† See Appendix, Note E.

‡ See Appendix, Note E.

and solitary state, to the condition of social and communicative beings.

It has been doubted whether a school for their instruction should be in a city. To remove these doubts, it may be stated that in Europe, the schools for the Deaf and Dumb are all in large cities; and that as they acquire their information through the medium of vision, the more they can see the better; and the arts, trades and busy scenes of a city, afford the best opportunity of giving them information on many subjects which would be very obscure, and in which they could not be well instructed without seeing. In New-York, the Museums and most places of public exhibition, are open to the pupils, and the visits they make to them, and the places where arts and trades are carried on, accompanied by their teachers, always afford subjects for instructive lessons.

“The Directors being now perfectly satisfied that this Institution is one of primary importance to those under their charge; that it is deserving of support and encouragement, and that it ought to be permanently located and established, have appointed a Committee of their Board to take the subject into consideration, and adopt such measures as may seem practicable towards building an Asylum in the city of New-York, for the accommodation of from one to two hundred Deaf and Dumb persons. It is their intention to annex work-shops to the establishment, and have the indigent employed in arts and trades during the intervals of instruction, or after a course of tuition.”*

This Committee has applied during the past winter to the Corporation of the city for aid, or ground to locate the buildings. Application has also been made to the Legislature of the State, and to the Congress of the United States, but the Directors have the mortification to announce, that they have been unsuccessful in all their applications. They have a final appeal to the liberality of the citizens of New-York, and when that is made, it is believed it will not be made in vain.

The exercises of the evening will now proceed under the direction of Mr. Loofborrow, the principal teacher. We present you with no bill of fare, in order that the exercises may be promiscuous, and call forth the abilities and intelligence of the pupils. This method, it has been thought, would be more striking and satisfactory, and the teachers have not had time to prepare set lessons in school to be brought forward on this occasion, as they were only informed a few days since, of the determination of the Directors to have this meeting.

* Extract from 7th Annual Report of the Directors to the Legislature.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
Exercises of the Evening,

AS THEY OCCURRED AT WASHINGTON HALL, ON THE 30TH
OF MAY, 1846.



THE exercises of the pupils having been promiscuous, as was stated in the introductory remarks, the following account is given from notes taken at the time ; but the writer has not confined himself to the order of succession, choosing rather to arrange them in such a manner as to illustrate the several series of signs as used in the school of the Institution.

1. ALPHABETIC SIGNS.

These signs consist of a particular position of the hand to represent, and to be used as a substitute for letters. The Deaf and Dumb employ these signs to spell words, instead of using the voice as other children do who hear.

After Dr. Akerly's introductory observations, the teacher called up two children, a little boy between six and seven, and a little girl six years old, both of New-York. Timothy D. Townsend made the manual signs, and Ann Maria Mabbitt repeated them after him. These are both beautiful interesting children ; the latter having been only two weeks in the school, and the former less than a year. They are both promising children, and have been taken into the school much younger than usual.

2. VERBAL SIGNS.

To give examples of verbal signs, Mr. Gazlay, who is himself Deaf and Dumb, and an assistant teacher, made signs for a number of words, as a *cow*, an *ox*, *oxen*, a *soldier*, a *drunkard*, and many others ; and from the signs so made, the little boy Townsend wrote them on the large slate, in a legible hand. He also wrote his own name. The exercise was then reversed, and Mr. Gazlay spelled several other words by the alphabetic signs, and Townsend made the signs for them, so well and so significant, as to call forth the applauses of the spectators.

Miss Rose, the Deaf Mute and assistant teacher, also exercised a little girl about eight years old, a pupil of the Institution, provided for by the Female Association. The signs for many words were given, and readily written on the large

slate, in presence of the spectators. This child having made progress beyond the mere writing of single words, Miss Rose asked a number of questions by writing them on the slate, and they were answered as follows :

What is your name ? Caroline Kirk.

How old are you ? I am eight years old.

Are your parents living ? Yes.

Where do they live ? In New-York.

Where did you live before you came to the Deaf and Dumb Institution ? I always lived in New-York.

Where do you live now ? I live in Leonard-street.

What is your mother's name ? Mary Kirk.

How many pupils are there in the Institution ? About 63.

As this child writes a plain legible hand, and very readily, many other questions were asked by Miss Rose, and correctly answered.

3. COMPREHENSIVE SIGNS.

Mr. Loofborrow communicated to Gazlay by signs, that he wished him to write a sentence, and explain the manner of its construction. He accordingly wrote,

“ *The large Frigate sails slowly on the vast ocean.*”

If this sentence had first been written, and was then to be explained to other Deaf Mutes, the prominent ideas, or the words which comprehend the substance of the sentence, would claim the first attention. These would be *frigate, sails, ocean*. But Gazlay wrote the sentence, and explained as he went on. Thus,

The first word written was *Frigate*, the subject of the sentence. He then went on to describe a frigate by signs, her masts, yards, sails, great guns, &c. He then examined the frigate for some striking or prominent quality, and preceded the noun by the adjective *large*, and added the definite article *the*. *The large frigate*. Then he asked what does the Frigate do ? He replied himself, she sails, and he wrote the word *sail*. He then inquired, did she sail, or does she sail now ? She sails now in present time, and he added the letter S, making the word *sails*. He then inquired in what manner does she sail, *fast* or *slow* ? He wrote the word *slow*. But he observed to his teacher, slow is an adjective and qualifies a noun, but an adverb qualifies a verb ; wherefore he added *ly*, making the word *slowly*. He asked, where does the frigate sail ? *On ocean*, was the reply. He first, however, wrote the word *ocean*, and inquired if she sails on or in the ocean ? and answered the question by writing *on* before it, leaving space to add a quality to the ocean. Is

the ocean large or small ? He described the ocean by signs, as being wide, extensive, and rising in high billows, and he preceded the word by the adjective *vast*, and completed the sentence, by placing the definite article before the adjective.

In this manner sentences are synthetically formed, and also analysed and brought to the comprehension of the Deaf and Dumb, and after understanding them, the verbal signs may be employed in the order of the sentence. In the above case, the teacher stood by as though he was the pupil, and explained to the company as Gazlay proceeded.

A number of questions were asked and answered by different pupils. As these questions required definitions containing abstract ideas, they will come under the head of Comprehensive Signs, inasmuch as these ideas had been previously explained by pantomime, and the pupils used their own words to form the answers.

WHAT IS HAPPINESS ?*

Answer by Miss Curtice, of Orange Co. N. Y.—It is completed desire, and all mankind cannot have happiness on the earth, but in Heaven.

By Miss Fullerton, of Washington Co. N. Y.—It is enjoying and not wishing more.

By Miss Rogers, of Suffolk Co. N. Y.—We shall be happy in heaven, if we are pious, it is not found on earth.

By Miss Rose, of New-York.—My mind continually desires something which I have not in possession in the world, but it is different when we are in heaven, we shall never do so there but we shall have happiness without desire.

By John Willcox, of Onondaga Co.—It is pleasure of our souls in heaven.

By Sayles Works, of Salina, Onondaga Co.—It is the satisfaction of the intelligent gentlemen who have the knowledge to write languages which are composed of the good sentences with the words.

By Miss Brookes, of New-York.—It is feeling to be satisfied.

By J. H. Gazlay, of Otsego Co.—It is felicity. If we dedicate ourselves to God by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be made durably happy in Heaven.

* This and all the other questions were written by the teacher on the large slate, and the answers written on small slates by the pupils, and read to the audience.

WHAT IS MISERY ?

Answer by Miss Curtice.—It is full of unhappiness, unsatisfied desires. We should have gone to hell unless God had sent his son into the world to save us, but God has sent him to save sinners, they will go to his throne and dwell with him if they believe in him.

By Miss Rose.—It is the unhappiness of desire unsatisfied, and also bodily pain and distress.

By John Willcox.—If our souls are continually wicked when we die we shall go to hell in unhappiness and misery forever.

By Sayles Works.—It is the sorrow of some persons disappointed in the business without receiving the wealth.

By Miss Brookes.—It is dissatisfaction.

By John H. Gazlay.—It is unhappiness, wretchedness and misfortune. If man had not sinned he would never have known sickness or distress of any kind, but he disobeyed his Creator and is therefore involved in sin and misery.

WHAT IDEA HAD YOU OF GOD BEFORE YOU WAS INSTRUCTED ?

Answer by Miss Curtice.—I had never known about God before I entered the Institution in this city. I was a heathen because I was ignorant of God's revelation.

By Miss Rose.—I had no knowledge in my mind of the revelation of God and Jesus Christ, and was never educated by my dear parents, for I was Deaf and Dumb, but now I am instructed by my teachers.

By John Willcox.—Before I was instructed I had an idea that God is a large, tall, strong man.

By Sayles Works.—I thought probably that God was a man in heaven like our bodies, because I was without knowledge.

By Miss Brookes.—I had never an idea of God before I came to this Institution, but I was taught by my teacher about the bible. I have not enough knowledge. I hope to obtain more knowledge.

By Richard Sip, of Bergen, New-Jersey.—When I was a little boy, I did not know about God. I was ignorant heathen. I did not know that God is infinitely wise and powerful. He created all things, he sees thro' all. My father wished to send me to school. I was instructed and now my mind has the knowledge of God. I am satisfied and thankful to him.

By Miss Clarke, of Elizabethtown, New-Jersey.—I was small and did not know about God formerly. I came to school. Mr. Loofborrow taught me about him. I believe God in Jesus Christ.

WHAT IDEA HAVE YOU OF GOD NOW ?

Answer By Miss Curtice.—God is the omnipotent creator of heaven and earth and all mankind. He is infinitely wise and in every place, but we cannot see him because he is a spirit.

By Miss Rose.—I have an idea that God is the good and infinite being who has existed from all eternity, and who has by his own almighty power created all things out of nothing.

By John Willcox.—I think he is a spirit and he always sees us.

By Sayles Works.—I think of his goodness, wisdom and power in creating the world, and likewise he continues to see the hearts of all deceitful people who show great hatred to their enemies in the earth.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEMORY AND RECOLLECTION ?

Answer by Miss Curtice.—Memory is the power of the mind which keeps knowledge continually, and recollection brings back that which we forget.

By Miss Brookes.—Memory is the power of the mind which keeps knowledge, and recollection brings it again.

By John H. Gazlay.—Memory is the power of retaining in the mind, and recollection is the recovery of the notion, or revival in the memory.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEAUTY AND ADMIRATION ?

Answer by Miss Curtice.—Beauty is a good disposition of the mind or elegance of shape, and admiration is feeling delightful.

By Miss Rose.—Beauty is symmetry of shape or elegance of colour, and admiration is pleasure on seeing any thing which is beautiful.

By J. H. Gazlay.—Beauty is the cause and admiration the effect.

c

Answer by Miss Rose.—It is sincere kindness in the heart to an object, we always admire the person whom we love.

By Miss Curtice.—It is true affection in the heart.

Mr. Loofborrow here paused in the exercises, and stated that the New-York Bible Society had by request, presented six Bibles to be given to indigent pupils as a premium, &c. Those to whom he presented them, were soon to leave the Institution and return to their parents. He delivered in public, one to each of the following persons, viz.

Sayles Works, of Onondaga County.

David H. Cole, of Ulster Co. from a family with two Deaf and Dumb.

John Willcox, with a sister Deaf and Dumb, from Onondaga County.

Margaret McAllister, from a family of three, in Montgomery County.

Oren Higbee, from a family of three, in Tompkins Co. and Sarah A. Banks, from a family of four, in Delaware Co.

He then explained to the pupils by signs, and several of them reduced it to writing.

Richard Sip wrote as follows.—The Bible Society have given my teacher six bibles to distribute to the most indigent Deaf and Dumb who are attentive to reward for improvement, they are satisfied to take and keep them and will carry and try to read in them. They will recollect and love the Bible Society in New-York.

John Willcox wrote—You have six bibles which you have received from the Bible Society. They do not wish to give them to the Deaf and Dumb pupils of this city, but the Society wish you will distribute them to the indigent Deaf and Dumb from the country when they leave school and go home. They must try to read slowly and understand it.

The teacher then wrote on the large slate,

WHAT IS A BIBLE SOCIETY?

Answer by Miss Brookes.—They print the bibles many languages, and send them to the heathen in their own languages.

By Sayles Works.—It is the number of pious people who will continue to distribute a large quantity of the bibles to heathen in all the world, who will have the happiness in reading the bibles about God.

By John Willcox.—It is a number of pious people who send the bibles to the heathen of different nations.

By John H. Gazlay.—It is an union of benevolent gentlemen and ladies for giving aid to send bibles in various languages to heathen in different parts of the world who should be taught about the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ and become enlightened. I hope the numerous heathen will become Christians.

By Richard Sip.—A Bible Society is a number of Christians who are satisfied to meet for the purpose of sending the word of God to the ignorant heathen.

By Miss Curtice.—It is a body of Christians who send many bibles to the heathen. They have bibles in different languages.

WHAT IS A TRACT SOCIETY ?

Answer by Miss Rose.—It is a body of benevolent Christians who extract and collect interesting narratives from the bible and religious books, and present them to thoughtless persons.

By Miss Curtice.—It is a number of Christians who send many tracts which are very easy, and extracts from the bible, to the wicked people.

By Richard Sip.—A Tract Society is a number of Christians who are satisfied to extract from the bible and religious books, and distribute the tracts to the heathen who repent of sin and recollect that they must pray to God who will pardon them from sin.

By J. H. Gazlay.—It is an union of pious people for having tracts and other good books presented to vicious persons. When they read in and observe the subject their conscience checks them for their guilt and sins, and they repent of sins, forsake them and pray heartily to God.

By John Willcox.—It is a number of pious men who copy from the bible in little books which they send to the people who can read and comprehend them.

WHY WERE SUNDAY SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED ?

Answer by Miss Curtice.—Because many children played on the sabbath days. Pious people saw their wickedness, pitied them for they were not educated, and not able to pay for their instruction. They determined to establish a Sunday school.

By Miss Rose.—Because many children that were ignorant played on the sabbath day. Pious persons saw their depravity and pitied them for they were not educated. The persons were conscious that God blamed them to neglect them, they decided to establish a Sunday School. These children do not pay for their instruction as they are indigent.

By John Willcox.—Because the poor wicked boys and girls played about the small bad streets, while the pious people were in the church they heard the noise of the children. The people thought they ought to collect and instruct them.

By Miss Brookes.—Because some poor and also rich children were playful and ignorant in the streets, but they have been taught about the word of God at Sunday-school.

By Sayles Works.—The Christians were conscious that God was angry with the increase of vicious boys who play on every Sunday, but pious persons came together, the children were educated in the Sunday-school.

At this stage of the exercises, Dr. Akerly stated that the pupils, on such an occasion, could not all be exercised. Some were more advanced than others, and wrote and answered questions more readily. He took the opportunity, however, of this interval, to distribute in manuscript, some specimens of attempts at composition by the pupils of Miss Stansbury's class.

4. SIGNS FOR NUMBERS.

Mr. Gazlay made the signs for numbers, and Mr. Loof-borrow explained the principle, and the manner in which they were used. For this purpose he exercised several pupils, who from the signs readily made the figures. The examples given were numerous, promiscuous, and some of them called for by the spectators. The explanation of these signs is given in the notes.

After this, Miss Curtice was exercised in arithmetic, by examples in addition, subtraction and multiplication, &c.

5. GRAMMATICAL SIGNS.

No separate examples were given of these signs, because they are generally combined with the signs for words, to express their variation and difference. If, for instance, we make the sign for the verb to see, by adding the sign for past time it designates the word saw. So if from a noun we can make an adjective, the sign for that word would be the sign of the noun, with the addition of the adjective sign. Or where an adverb is derivative, it will be distinguished by the sign of the radical word and the adverbial sign, &c.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS, BY DR. MILNOR.

In concluding the exercises of the evening, the Rev. Dr. Milnor, Vice-President of the Institution, addressed the audience, thanked them for their presence and attention, and the interest they had taken on this occasion. He took the opportunity to apologize for the inconvenience the company had suffered from the crowded state of the room, and the deficient accommodations, which had arisen from accidental circumstances, beyond the controul of the committee of arrangements.

In calling the attention of the audience to this Institution, he conceived that it only wanted to be more generally known, in order to receive the public patronage with a greater degree of liberality, which he conceived it greatly merited, being, in his estimation, one of the most deserving of charities. Here (said he) are more than sixty children and pupils of the Institution, who can neither hear nor speak, and yet they can be instructed, and have been taught, as you have all seen, to a degree that is surprising, and in a manner surpassing expectation. The misfortune of Deafness is in some measure abated by instruction, and the great difference and distance between the Deaf and Dumb and those who can hear and speak, may be removed by an art which must be considered as an extraordinary one, let it be viewed in what light it will. It is a fact, and well deserving of notice, that even the younger pupils spell with accuracy, and write a fair legible hand, better even than other children of the same age. This arises from the peculiarity of the manner of instruction; their learning to spell by the eye and not by the ear, as our children do, and by the constant practice of writing the words and sentences given to them as lessons.

The importance of the instruction which has been imparted to those you have seen under exercise, is enhanced, when we consider that the lights of the gospel have been opened to their minds, as all have witnessed, in the answers given to the questions about Bible and Tract Societies, and Sunday Schools. It must have been observed too, that most of them had no ideas of a Supreme Being, before they were entered as pupils in this Institution, as their answers to a question on the subject have shown. Their answers to the question as to what idea they now have of God, are indications of improvement, and their capacity for religious instruction. Their answers must not be considered as perfect specimens of composition, but only as the dawnings of intellect heretofore concealed by a dark cloud.

It has been one of the painful tasks of the Directors of this Institution, to be under the necessity of rejecting frequent applications for the admission of indigent pupils, but as the bounty of the State is limited, the Directors have been obliged to limit the admissions to the state of their means. If these were increased to warrant it, we could soon double the number of our pupils from our own State. Whatever may have caused the rejection of our applications to the Corporation, to Congress, and to our own Legislature during the past winter, for assistance to build an Asylum, we yet hope that when the merits of the question are better understood, we shall then succeed.

The school rooms of this Institution are in the New-York Institution, late the Alms-house of the city. If any who are now present have been so much interested in the exercises, as to have a desire to witness more closely and intimately, the manner of teaching Deaf Mutes, they are invited to visit the school, where they will be admitted by the teachers.

REMARKS.

The writer of the foregoing account was present at the exercises, and took notes of the proceedings, but he could not obtain all the answers to the questions at the time. He afterwards visited the school, and taking the pupils apart from their teachers, asked the same questions, and obtained the answers as herein stated. It is believed they are not materially different from those given on the 30th, at Washington Hall. He found that some wrote the answers very readily, while others were slower, and some could not answer all the questions. He also ascertained that the pupil who answered that happiness was, "*enjoying and not wishing more,*" answered in the same words, and could not answer any of the other questions. He therefore concluded, that in her case, it was a mere effort of memory, in retaining a definition previously given to her by her teacher. This was not surprising, since she had been a short time in the Institution. But with respect to the others, it was evident, ideas had been conveyed to them, and they expressed themselves in their own words, according to the time they had been in the Institution, and the improvement they had made.

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING NOTES AND DOCUMENTS, IN RELATION TO THE INTERESTING SUBJECT OF DEAF MUTES AND THEIR INSTRUCTION.

NOTE A.

LIST OF PUPILS, MAY 30TH, 1826.

STATE PUPILS.

1 Sarah Rogers,	} First District.	17 Plena Eggleston,	} Fifth Dist.
2 John Harwood,		18 Tharsey Russell,	
3 William Jackson,		19 Orville Murray,	
4 Mary Smith,		20 Mary Holt,	
5 James Miller,	} Second Dist.	21 Oren Higbee,	} Sixth Dist.
6 Keturah Van Cleft,		22 Sarah A. Banks,	
7 David H. Cole,		23 John Denton,	
8 Ann McBride,		24 Philesta Hitchcock,	
9 John T. S. Hanson,	} Third Dist.	25 Catharine Willcox,	} Seventh Dis.
10 Ann Mullens,		26 John Willcox,	
11 Henry Hoofman,		27 Sayles Works,	
12 Ward Persons,		28 Ann Myre,	
13 Marg't McAllister,	} Fourth Dist.	29 Daniel McSweeny,	} Eighth Dist.
14 Cath. McAllister,		30 Joshua Whitney,	
15 Eliz. McAllister,		31 Clinton Fay,	
16 Jane Fullerton,		32 Roxey Denton,	

PUPILS OF THE FEMALE ASSOCIATION.

33 Caroline Kirk, of New-York.	36 Obadiah Rogers, Suffolk County.
34 James Jennings, do.	37 Almira Hallock. do.
35 A. O. Rodman, Columbia County.	

PAY PUPILS.

38 Christiana Brookes, New-York.	41 Charlotte Prudden, New-Jersey.
39 Ebenezer W. Burr, Connecticut.	42 Matthias Pierson, do.
40 Richard Sip, New-Jersey.	43 Ann Maria Mabbitt, New-York,

PART PAY PUPILS.

44 Timothy D. Townsend, New-York.	47 Henry Persons, Columbia County.
45 Phebe Clark, New-Jersey.	48 Emily Curtice, Orange County.
46 Eliza Briare, Albany.	

CHARITY PUPILS.

49 J. Wardline.	56 Elijah Jones,
50 William Wake,	57 John Johnson,
51 Stephen McGuire,	58 Mary Ann Henderson.
52 Andrew McKinney,	59 Lewis F. Albrecht,
53 James McGowan,	60 Benjamin Gatfield,
54 Washington Swan,	61 Margaret Quin.
55 Ann Reeves,	

CLOTHED AND SUPPORTED FOR THEIR SERVICES.

62 John H. Gazlay,	} Acting part of the time as Assistant Teachers.
63 Mary E. Rose,	

RECAPITULATION.

State Pupils, - - -	32	Charity Pupils, - - -	13
Pupils of the Female Association, - - -	5	Clothed and supported for their	
Private Pay Pupils, - - -	6	services, - - -	2
Part Pay Pupils, - - -	5		
Total Deaf and Dumb in the School.			63

NOTE B.

Statement, shewing the number of Deaf and Dumb persons in the several Counties in the State of New-York, according to the Census of 1825.

COUNTIES.	No. of Persons.	COUNTIES.	No. of Persons
Albany,	23	Onondaga,	14
Allegany.	8	Ontario,	15
Broome,	5	Orange,	17
Cattaraugus,	7	Orleans,	8
Cayuga,	25	Oswego,	1
Chautauque,	7	Otsego,	26
Chenango,	6	Putnam,	2
Clinton,	12	Queens,	9
Columbia,	12	Rensselaer,	13
Cortlandt,	4	Richmond,	none
Delaware,	11	Rockland,	none
Dutchess,	8	Saratoga,	13
Eric,	9	Schenectady,	4
Essex,	4	Schoharie,	14
Franklin,	5	Seneca,	4
Genesee,	17	St. Lawrence,	13
Greene,	15	Steuben,	14
Herkimer,	12	Suffolk,	7
Jefferson,	18	Sullivan,	1
Kings,	none	Tioga,	2
Lewis,	5	Tompkins,	17
Livingston,	6	Ulster,	19
Madison,	12	Warren,	4
Monroe,	8	Washington,	25
Montgomery,	55	Wayne,	23
New-York,	56	Westchester,	4
Niagara,	5	Yates,	2
Oneida,	19		
	374		271
			374
			645

Total Deaf and Dumb in the State, 645.

NOTE C.



Deaf and Dumb Alphabet.

A a



B b



C c



D d



E e



F f



G g



H h



I i



J j



K k



L l



M m



N n



O o



D

P p



Q q



R r



S s



T t



U u



V v



W w



X x



Y y



Z z



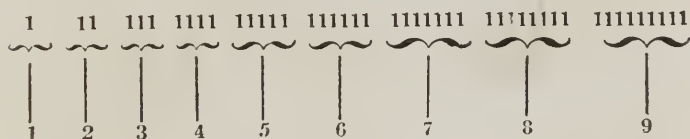
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NOTE D.*Signs for Numbers.*

In teaching the Deaf and Dumb Arithmetic, signs for numbers are as essential as signs for letters, words and ideas. These signs are the medium of communication between the teacher and pupil, and produce an interchange of understanding. The natural knowledge of the Deaf and Dumb, as relates to numbers, is very limited, and does not extend much beyond the number of their fingers. The Abbe Sicard's signs for figures is far from being complete; hence Mr. David Seixas, the zealous teacher of the Deaf and Dumb in Philadelphia, adopted a plan which was an improvement, and was in practice in that city. It was adopted in the New-York Institution for a time, but some difficulty occurred in designating large numbers. In consequence of this, Mr. Stansbury, formerly a teacher in this Institution, adopted a system of his own, which for some time past, has been in use in the School for the Deaf and Dumb in this city. The plan adopted is in accordance with the French signs for letters, one hand only being necessary in expressing any amount as high as hundreds of millions. Either hand may be employed as for letters, though in general the right is principally used. The nine digits are expressed by the fingers, and the letter O of the French alphabet stands for a cipher. After the fingers are understood to represent the Arabic characters for the nine digits, the hand is to be placed with the fingers extended vertically in front for units, horizontally in front for tens, downwards in front for hundreds: on the right hand vertically for thousands, horizontally for tens of thousands, downwards for hundreds of thousands: and on the left hand in the same manner for millions, tens of millions, and hundreds of millions. The whole system then consists in nine positions of the fingers, and nine positions of the hand.

The following wood engravings by Morgan, will illustrate the positions for the digits. In the use of figures, however, it is first necessary to exhibit to our pupils the power and value of the Arabic characters, which are arbitrary signs and substitutes for marks. This is done after the manner of Sicard, as follows:

**1****2**

3



4



5



6



7



8



9



0



A more particular explanation and application of these signs in the practice of arithmetic with the Deaf and Dumb, is given in the following letter from Mr. Stansbury to Dr. Mitchell.

TO DR. SAMUEL L. MITCHILL,

President of the Board of Directors of the New-York Institution for Instructing the Deaf and Dumb.

SIR,

Knowing the interest you feel in whatever relates to the progress of science, and the cause of humanity, I embrace with pleasure the opportunity of communicating to you, a new system of signs for teaching figures to the Deaf and Dumb, invented about a year ago, while I was engaged in the institution, which has been successfully used since that time. Instead of employing both hands one alone is required; the thumb represents one, the index finger two, the middle finger three, the ring finger four, and the open hand five; the little finger represents six; to this add the ring finger for seven; then add the middle finger for eight, and the index finger for nine; the thumb resting on the palm, as in the letter B of the manual alphabet. To indicate ten, the thumb is pointed forward; twenty, the thumb and fore-finger, and so on to the sign for nine, pointing horizontally. Hundreds are pointed down, the hand being held in front of the body. For thousands the same order is pursued as for units; only holding the hand on the *right* side of the body, or giving it a gentle inclination toward the right, when the sign for thousands is made. For millions, the hand is placed across the body toward the left, and the same signs made for units, tens and hundreds; the units pointing up, the tens forward, and the hundreds down.

In order to convey to the pupils, a distinct idea of the value of figures, I employed clay, formed into very small lumps, and stuck upon a board on which was drawn the representation of two hands, and the figures 1, 2, 3, &c. to 9, against the fingers; then adding one more lump of clay for the remaining thumb, to the nine lumps already on the board, I pressed them into one, and pointed the thumb *forward* towards it; to this was added another lump of the same size for the fore-finger, also represented pointing forward, and another, and another, to nine; when a tenth lump for the remaining thumb, being united as before to the nine, formed one of a new series, indicated by the thumb pointing *down*; to this, nine others of the same size were added, and when the ten lumps were pressed into one, this was placed on the right side of the body, to show that every unit in that position was so much larger than that which was in front of the body. Having done this, it was easy, by signs, to make them understand that these large lumps or *thousands*, were to be pressed into one to form a much larger unit, called a *million*, and placed on the left side of the body. The same thing may be exemplified by weights in a scale: let the units be placed on a shelf above the head, the weights of ten times the unit, on a shelf breast high, and the weights ten times as heavy as these, on the floor; by this arrangement, the operations of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication may be readily taught. Perhaps a more convenient mode would be, to have circular pieces of thin wood, with a hole in the centre, and a wire rising from the bottom one just high enough to make a pile of ten.

NOTE E.

Previous to leaving the school, John B Vermilya, the boy referred to, page 11, wrote the following letter to the Directors. He had been about three years in the Asylum as a boarding pupil, and some time previous a day scholar.

To the Directors of the Institution }
for the Deaf and Dumb. }

ASYLUM FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB,

New-York, Sept. 27th, 1825.

GENTLEMEN,

About two years and eight months ago you received me into the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb and attend school to learn of the teacher who is labouring with his pupils. I have continual study and like it very well and feel very grateful and thankful that you supply me with board and tuition. I wish to learn the business of Cabinet Making at present and think of striving to be ingenious in making the furniture with the Cabinet Maker who will teach me a trade. I shall leave school in one week to learn if you are willing.

I am your dutiful Pupil,

J. B. VERMILYA.

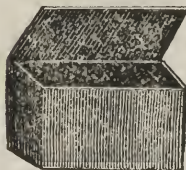
**VERSES**

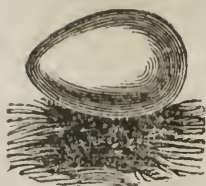
WRITTEN ON THE NEW-YORK INSTITUTION FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB, BY JAMES NACK, A LATE PUPIL OF THE INSTITUTION.

Of ignorance the former victims here,
Rise to a nobler and a happier sphere,
The blessings their unhappy lot denied,
Again by education are supplied,
To burst the clouds that wrap the mind in Night,
To gaze on Science in her shrine of light;
When friends beloved in social converse meet,
To interchange with them communion sweet,
With warm affection's eloquence to tell,
What fond emotions in the bosom dwell,
These blessings they have found—nor these alone,
They know the most sublime that can be known.
They know a God—to Him their steps are led,
The path of everlasting joy to tread;
Their knees are taught before his throne to bend,
Their hearts to hail a Father and a Friend.
In fervent prayer upon her bended knee,
Before her God the cherub infant see;
Her raven hair in clustering tresses flowing,
Veiling her cheek in beauty's mantle glowing,
While she might seem in the enthusiast's eyes,
A cherub bright descended from the skies;
Her lips are mute—but from her heart a prayer
Ascends to Heaven, is heard and answered there.
And wouldst thou know what from her heart proceeds?
For those who led her to a God she pleads,
That all the blessings they to her have given,
May be on earth repaid them and in Heaven.

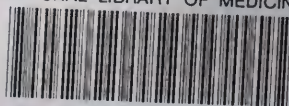
JAMES NACK.

*Monosyllables of three letters, represented by sensible Objects,
used in the commencement of Instruction.*





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